

1912

# Trinity College Bulletin, July 1912 (Report of the President)

Trinity College

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/bulletin>

---

## Recommended Citation

Trinity College, "Trinity College Bulletin, July 1912 (Report of the President)" (1912). *Trinity College Bulletin*. Book 42.  
<http://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/bulletin/42>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Trinity serial publications (1868 - present) at Trinity College Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Trinity College Bulletin by an authorized administrator of Trinity College Digital Repository.

# Trinity College

Report

of

The President

July, 1912



Hartford

Printed for the College

1912

# Trinity College

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

To the Trustees of Trinity College

### The President

July 1912



Hartford

Printed for the College

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

---

### To the Trustees of Trinity College:

GENTLEMEN:—At the date of this report, June 7th, it seems to me that the year has been on the whole the most satisfactory since I entered upon my present work. The College has been larger than ever before, the work has been well done, and the attitude of the several bodies that make up the College has been in the main highly satisfactory. It should be understood that this feeling of satisfaction is based upon the comparison of this year with former years. We have by no means reached our ideals in any respect.

Below is a table, similar to those presented in former years, showing the number of students who have pursued the different departments of study:

	No. of students
English, . . . . .	168
Mathematics, . . . . .	141
French, . . . . .	118
History, . . . . .	94
Philosophy, . . . . .	83
Latin, . . . . .	80
German, . . . . .	78
Civil Engineering, . . . . .	76
Physics, . . . . .	69
Chemistry, . . . . .	68
Biology, . . . . .	45
Geology, . . . . .	40
Economics, . . . . .	38
Drawing, . . . . .	31
Biblical Literature, . . . . .	25
Greek, . . . . .	25
Spanish, . . . . .	22
Italian, . . . . .	2

Hitherto Biology and Geology have been reported together, but as the departments have become definitely separated in administration it seems best to recognize this change in my tables.

The percentages of the total work devoted to the several departments for a period of four years, ending with the year about to close, are appended:

	1908-09	1909-10	1910-11	1911-12
	%	%	%	%
Biblical Literature, . . . . .	0.9	0.9	2.4	2.1
Biology, . . . . .	...	...	...	3.3
Chemistry, . . . . .	4.1	5.3	6.7	5.7
Drawing, . . . . .	3.7	3.3	3.6	2.6
Economics, . . . . .	5.0	6.1	4.9	3.2
English, . . . . .	14.5	14.9	14.2	14.0
French, . . . . .	9.0	9.7	9.5	9.8
Geology, . . . . .	...	...	...	3.7
German, . . . . .	6.9	5.7	5.8	6.5
Greek, . . . . .	3.0	1.8	3.3	2.1
History, . . . . .	9.6	9.7	7.5	7.8
Latin, . . . . .	5.1	5.1	4.9	6.6
Mathematics, . . . . .	11.3	12.5	11.2	11.7
Natural History, . . . . .	6.9	3.5	6.2	...
Philosophy, . . . . .	7.6	8.6	6.9	6.9
Physics, . . . . .	5.8	5.9	5.8	5.7
Spanish, . . . . .	1.4	1.4	2.2	1.8

The percentages for 1911-12 show more changes than I had anticipated. There is a noteworthy increase in the Latin for example. The expected increase in the Spanish did not take place. In the opinion of Professor Gill this is because the language is not yet recognized by the Faculty as fulfilling the so-called modern language requirement for graduation.

Of the professors reporting, six comment favorably upon the work done in their several departments, one thinks that his classes have not done as well as usual, and nine have nothing to say upon the subject.

From these reports it appears that there is urgent need of a second lecture room for the department of Mathematics. This can probably be provided without great difficulty and at no expense.



The need of an additional instructor in English to take charge of the Public Speaking, and to assist in the instruction of the lower classes in English is more and more pressing. We have got through this year with such assistance as could be rendered by a theme reader. The work has been well done but this is not the best way to do the work.

The department of Geology, alluded to above, has been administered with great success. The enrolment in the classes is very much larger than last year. Gifts of specimens and collections have been received from Mr. Paul Billings of Butte, Montana, from Mr. Alden Grimes of the Amalgamated Copper Company, and from William G. Mather, Esquire, of the Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company.

The instructor in Drawing urges with reason the instalment of suitable facilities for blueprinting.

Various literary and scientific activities of the professors, aside from their work as instructors, deserve notice —

Professor Babbitt has addressed several teachers' conventions, has published articles in classical and other journals, and has agreed to collaborate with others in the preparation of the Loeb Classical Library.

Professor Kleene has served on the Executive Committee of a large local organization, has delivered several public addresses, and has published one paper in the Quarterly Journal of Economics.

Professor Brenton has lectured and preached extensively during the year. It should be noted that he has conducted again a class in Public Speaking, voluntary on the part of the students and without pay for himself.

Professor Adams has collaborated in the preparation of a concordance to Wordsworth's poems which has just been published. He is the author of a review article in Modern Language Notes, has lectured at various times, and has completed his preliminary work on the Bibliography of English scholarship.

Professor Gettell has conducted a voluntary seminar in Political Science, has lectured frequently before high schools, clubs, and associations, has written book reviews for the

Political Science Review and the Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, has supplied an article on political science for the Encyclopaedia of Education, and has published his text book entitled "Readings in Political Science." He represents Connecticut on the Journal Committee of the American Political Science Association. It seems proper to mention here Professor Gettell's services to the Athletic Association. For four years he has acted as coach for the football team. The foregoing shows abundantly that this work has in no wise interfered with his labors as a professor and as an investigator and writer. It is gratifying that his coaching has been technically successful, and the most gratifying thing of all is that he has demonstrated the fact that a thoroughly competent and accomplished professor can do a great deal to improve the spirit in which intercollegiate games are carried on and to develop that sense of fairness and honorable intensity of effort which is one of the best results of the modern athletic spirit.

Professor Gill has addressed the New England Modern Language Association, has prepared a text edition of Voltaire's *Traité de Métaphysique* which has been published, and has prepared an edition of *Los Amantes de Teruel* which is not yet in print.

Under the administration of Professor Morse a most interesting course of lectures by eminent biological specialists has been delivered in Boardman Hall during the winter. The attendance of students was very large and the professors and people from town attended in numbers which seriously taxed the accommodations in our largest lecture room. The course has been of great value to the College and reflects credit upon the professor in charge.

Professor Barret has completed the third book of the Kashmirean Atharva Veda which is to be published next autumn. He has assisted Doctor Bloomfield of the Johns Hopkins University and has written two considerable book reviews.

Mr. Barrows spent the summer of 1911 in the employment of Messrs. Spurr & Company, conducting a geological survey in Mexico.



The report of the Medical Director shows that the number of excuses issued by him on account of illness, after direct examination of the men, for that portion of the year ending May 20th, is 62, or 35 less than last year. This is very satisfactory. On the other hand, the number of excuses issued in deference to notes and certificates from parents and physicians amounts to 200, or 3 more than last year. Comparing the number of students in residence with the number who live at home we reach the surprising fact that there has been relatively nearly  $7\frac{1}{2}$  times as much illness among the students outside of college as among those inside. I commented upon this situation a year ago, but the evil has increased until the extent to which alleged ill health is allowed to interrupt the studies of non-resident students has become a serious hindrance to college work. Perhaps it is not too much to say that it is approaching the intolerable. I hope very much that next year some different plan may diminish this evil.

The mention of this subject leads me to comment upon what seems to be a prevailing impression that college work and school work are not to be taken very seriously. The amount of time devoted to it seems to me ridiculously small, and it is diminishing. The number of days' attendance required in the public schools in Connecticut is 180, less than half the days in the year, though a little more than half of the week-days. This minimum is certainly small enough. It is too small when we remember the importance of school training to boys and girls, and when we consider the amount of time devoted to school work by the children of the progressive European countries. Yet this minimum is by no means reached in the case of most of the private schools in New England, where the amount of time devoted to academic work falls in some cases as low as thirty weeks, making no allowance for examination periods and incidental holidays.

The situation among the colleges is becoming really distressing. The tendency to shorten the year is marked, and whereas this tendency is not always evident in the catalogues, a knowledge of actual conditions, of the period of examinations, and of the dates on which portions of the student body



are allowed to stop their work shows that in reality college work is taken in a very casual and intermittent fashion. A candid survey of the field leads me to the conclusion that at Trinity we work rather more days than in most other institutions of similar grade and standing. Yet the showing which I shall present is to me humiliating.

Leaving out the vacations there are 253 days, apparently, of term time, but there must be large subtractions from this total. In the first place, there are 60 Sundays and Saturdays. It is quite true that we hold recitations on Saturdays now, but it is also true that this arrangement was made to meet the necessities of a schedule adapted to our system of electives. The normal work is 3 hours per day per man, and 15 hours per week, or 5 days of 3 recitations each. The fact that it is spread out to cover 6 days in many cases is not significant. I do not know how many students have free days each week, but a good many do. There are four holidays to be taken out. Again, there are 20 days in the year devoted to examinations. It is undoubtedly true that examinations are necessary, and it is true also that the undergraduates do more studying at these times than at any other period of equal length during the year. However, as they are studying what they ought to have learned before, and as the days mark absolutely no progress, it is fair for my present purpose to subtract them. Again, in common with most other colleges, we permit the students to take a considerable number of absences, called "allowed absences"; and these amount to 32 recitation absences per year. Not all the students take all the absences that they might. Most of them do, and other absences beside, but I find that this past year the average number of allowed absences taken per man is 25, or, roughly, 8 average working days per year. Collecting these results we find that at Trinity College 161 working days per year represents the sum total of the average student's activities. Yet the situation is worse than this. Men think that they must be excused for small illnesses, as stated above; they must be excused from time to time for business purposes or to take part in athletic contests out of town; again, sometimes their professors through illness of their own, illness in

the family, absence to attend college gatherings of one sort and another, or absence for other good reason fail to meet their classes. Such causes lead to those incidents commonly called by students and others "cuts". No estimate can be given of the number of them. It is also possible for several absences to be incurred by students after their allowed absences are exhausted before summary discipline follows. Altogether, I am disposed to say that to regard the occupations of a college student as work which can be estimated by the year is one of those notions which are too humorous for laughter, as there are some things too sad for tears.

That there is some vague public recognition of this is sufficiently evidenced by the growth and increasing prosperity of summer schools, where college students and school teachers assemble every summer for six weeks of something which they regard as study, and which really occasion, I fancy, quite as much serious work as is accomplished in any earlier period of equal length during the so-called academic year. In these schools also gather college professors, supplementing their previous work by supplying the instruction sought by these summer pupils, and supplementing also their salaries, which in most institutions are all too small.

I am sincerely distressed by this lamentable situation. If I believed that other institutions were on a higher plane in this respect than Trinity I should be profoundly discouraged. As it is, I find myself wondering whether Trinity College might not do well to be the first to do something toward modifying present conditions as to attendance; whether we might not lengthen our college year materially by having Commencement certainly not earlier than it is now, by beginning earlier in September, by cutting out the Easter recess entirely. This is one of the questions which I hope will be taken up and discussed frankly and fully by the proposed commission on academic administration which I trust is to be established at this meeting of your Board. Perhaps it makes no very great difference to the United States of America what a small college like Trinity does in a matter of this kind, but if it be true that our people have a right to look at college training as a charm-



ing and enjoyable interlude in the activities of human life, if it be true that we are causing our boys and girls to waste the best and most enthusiastic period of their adult life by delaying their preparation through frivolous imitations of hard work, if it be true that graduates when they leave us feel the pressure of actual work as something absolutely unprecedented in their experience; then one of two things will happen — the colleges will reform or will be left off the map of the country. I am not losing sight of the right of youth to happiness and play, but I fear that those who have control of our educational interests are losing sight of the purpose and importance of education. We talk about it splendidly, we are even eloquent in exploiting its necessity and its benefits, and then we administer it as if it were a rest cure department of a hospital.

Partly, I suppose, this attitude has resulted from the carrying over into the twentieth century of the feeling developed during the middle nineteenth century that a college education was the luxury of the exceptional person, whereas the truth ought to be recognized that a college education is the necessary preliminary to loyal and self-sacrificing service. The undergraduates of today are men. The average Junior or Senior is over twenty-one years of age, entitled to a vote, to all the privileges of citizenship, burdened with its responsibilities. It is grotesque that he should longer be babied. The average Freshman is more than nineteen years old. He is at the age when his German and French contemporaries are beginning their professional studies. He is older than most of the men who fought the battles of the civil war, at the time of their enlistment. His brothers who cannot go to college are lucky if they get Saturday afternoons and Sundays off and a fortnight's vacation per year. Why should these men be turned loose for nearly half the working-days between entrance and graduation?

I venture to close my report just at this point because I earnestly desire the authorities of Trinity College to consider whether the language which I have used up to this point is or is not justified by the facts, whether it is or is not desirable to try for our part to make the college course a thing more strenuous, more fruitful, more essential than hitherto it has been.



Finally, may I venture this recommendation, that hereafter my formal annual report be presented at the October meeting of the Trustees rather than at the June meeting. Such an arrangement will enable me to present at once a complete picture of an entire year. Writing as I have done for the last eight years while the academic year is still in progress, I feel a considerable handicap which might easily be avoided. It is, I think, the common practice to issue reports analogous to the foregoing in the autumn rather than during the Commencement season.

Respectfully,

F. S. LUTHER,

*President.*

